



USAID-COMPETE PARTNER FUNDING SUPPORT TO EAGC

MONTHLY REPORT

JANUARY 2012

A. INTRODUCTION

This report from Eastern Africa Grain Council (EAGC) is for the month of January 2012 covering the achievements under USAID-COMPETE funding support to EAGC. The Grant is aimed at strengthening institutional coordination and regional structured grain trading system through integrated regional market information systems, policy and reduced barriers to trade. The objectives of the entire Grant are as follows:

1. To facilitate institutional strengthening to enable EAGC to deliver services to its stakeholders across the region with a particular emphasis on strengthening the capacity of satellite offices in Uganda and Tanzania.
2. To formalize regional agricultural markets and structured trade systems in the Eastern and Southern Africa region through training of trainers in harmonized grains standards, rules of trade (tariffs, simplified certificate of origin (SCO), Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards (SPS), WRS/Commodities Exchanges and dispute resolution.
3. To expand RATIN into a truly regional market information platform that integrates national MIS providers and provides timely and accurate data and analysis to all value chain participants and is the region's preferred source of market information.
4. To hold a successful Grain Trade Summit in Uganda in October 2011 to discuss the systems required to formalize, strengthen and integrate the regional staple foods value chain, increase stakeholder participation in structured trading systems and promote regional trade and food security.
5. To organize Agribusiness Fairs in Kenya and Tanzania to bring small-scale farmers and FBOs together with leading regional traders and processors to build linkages across the value chain.
6. To engage directly with national governments in the EAC to ensure full adoption and institutionalization of the EAC's harmonized grains standards.

B. INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

a) Regional and Country Operations

Through the funding from USAID-COMPETE, the EAGC offices in Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya were operational. Through the support, EAGC intensified its membership recruitment drive. One miller-Mama Miller Ltd in Kenya was recruited in January 2012. This pushes the EAGC membership to 95.

C. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

a) Structured Trading Systems (STS)

STS TOT workshop in Nakuru, Kenya

Through the support from USAID-COMPETE, SIDA and AGRA, EAGC conducted the “Training of Trainers” workshop on Structured Trading System (STS) in Nakuru, from January 12 – 13. Twenty seven officers(19 males : 8 females) from Cereal Growers Association and Kenya National Federation of Agricultural producers (KENFAP) the producer organizations two work closely with grain producers in Kenya were trained. This training programme was another phase in the process of competence building in the EAC countries for applying the concept of STS in Grain Industry particularly support to farmers to improve their performance in agribusiness and access markets.

There were two main aspects to the EAGC Training of Trainers’ programme on STS. The first was the training workshop which consisted of trainings on:

- Post-Harvest Management and Grain Standards & Grading (EAC standards)
- Grain Handling, Warehousing and Storage
- Trading Contracts and Arbitration procedures for trade dispute resolutions
- Market information sourcing and disseminate for trade purposes
- Warehouse Receipt Systems and Commodity Exchange

The second was a study tour to a grain handling plant. This served as reinforcement to knowledge and skills gained while at the same time through interactions with the operator.

The aim of this study tour was to bring understand in the following areas:

- Grain intake procedures
- Sampling and testing for quality check

- Grain Storage
- Challenges faced in grain trade.

The resource persons were drawn from EAGC, CGA, Lesiolo Grain Handlers and USAID-COMPETE. The participants were broken into two groups to allow them to develop their work plans and draw their action plans with clear timelines and deliverables. Groups were urged to understand their role in strengthening STS while developing the action plans.

b) Market Information Systems (MIS)

RATIN Survey

EAGC carried out End user Survey to evaluate the information needs of the region's staple foods value chain actors as part of the broader effort to upgrade its Regional Agricultural Trade Intelligence Network (RATIN) website and build it into a regional Market Information System platform. Ipsos/Synovate, one of the region's leading market research firms was engaged to conduct this survey to help better understand the unique information requirements of the survey. The survey process which began on January 5, 2012 with the mapping of survey respondents is almost complete with only the final report remaining.

RATIN Overhaul

RATIN website overhaul process has been ongoing from December last year with the major component being done in January. The entire project is about 95% complete with the core system development fully completed. The remaining components are approximated to take about two weeks and it includes: the user interfaces, the maps and the reports management system. The Data Analysis and Modeling (DAM) components are also complete. Testing phase has already begun with application phones' training scheduled for this week.

Market and Border Monitoring

- In order to strengthen the monitoring activity and make the process user driven, EAGC conducted a market survey in Uganda with the aim of expanding its RATIN coverage in the region.
- MIS engaged its monitors in various markets and border points across the region. This is an ongoing process and it's being strengthened from time to time to include more market parameters.

c) Annual Agribusiness Fairs

Agribusiness Fair Tanzania

Date, Venue and Theme

The preparation for the EAGC Annual Agribusiness Fair 2012 themed, “**Promoting Agribusiness for economic development prosperity**” is underway. The Fair will be organized jointly by EAGC and Selian Agricultural Research Institute (SARI) and is scheduled to take place in Arusha, Tanzania on 8th and 9th June 2012.

Sourcing for Exhibitors and Sponsors

The notification letters to exhibitors and sponsors were done. So far 151 exhibitors have been contacted. One sponsor has confirmed to support the supply of fertilizers for the set up of the crops demo plots. The fliers and banners for this event have also been developed ready for printing.

Preparation for the Stakeholders Briefing and media launch

The Stakeholders Briefing and media launch has been scheduled to take place at Kibo Palace hotel on 13th February 2012. Approximately 80 stakeholders including press are expected to be at the Launch.

Setting the Crops Demonstration plots

The land for setting up the crops demo has been tilled and plots are being demarcated. The irrigation system is being worked at to ensure that there is enough water supply at the demo site.



Tractor ploughing land for Crops Demo at SARI

Agribusiness Fair Uganda

Dates, Venue and Theme

EAGC and Ngetta Zonal Agricultural Research & Development Institute (NGEZARDI) are geared to hold the 2nd Agribusiness Fair in Lira, Uganda. The dates have been agreed as 21st and 22nd June 2012, venue being the

NGEZARDI premises. The theme has been agreed as ***“Improving livelihoods through enhancing access to markets”*** and two committees are in place; one in Kampala and the other in Lira. Proposals for the Events Manager were sent out to potential organizers and three have been selected to make presentations to a panel selected from the organizing committee. Tentative dates for the presentations are between 6th and 8th February 2012. A draft budget and checklist are in place and notification to stakeholders has begun, especially for the seed companies in Uganda.



Agribusiness Fair Committee meeting in Lira, Uganda

Sourcing for Exhibitors and Sponsors

The notification to exhibitors and sponsors has been done. EAGC and NGEZARDI are prepared to market and promote the event and mobilize exhibitors and sponsors to participate. Banners and fliers have been designed and they will be printed soon.

Preparation for the Stakeholders Briefing and media launch

The Stakeholders Briefing and media launch has been scheduled to take place in Kampala on 16th February 2012.

Setting the Crops Demonstration plots

A meeting was held on 1st and 2nd Feb.2012 at NGEZARDI to discuss plans to set up the crops demo. The institute has continually been setting up crops demonstration plots for horticultural crops, maize, rice, fruits trees and so forth.

Upcoming Activities

STS

- 2nd STS ToT Workshop in Uganda on 27th-28th Feb.2012
- 2nd STS ToT Workshop in Rwanda on 1st -2nd March 2012

MIS

- Monitor's training to equip the monitors with more skills that will be valuable in the revamped RATIN is scheduled- 12th -14th March 2012.

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